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SUMMARY FOR OFFICIAL NOTICE DMS-2003-Q-5

Implementation of a ProDUR edit that will require manual review to determine medical necessity for an early refill on a controlled drug.

The Arkansas Medicaid Pharmacy Program reimburses for up to a 31-day supply of a medication per month for recipients with prescription drug benefits. The Prospective Drug Utilization Review (ProDUR), which is required by OBRA '90, is currently administered through point of sale software edits that allow recipients to fill or refill the same medication after 75% of the days supply has been consumed. For example, when a patient receives a 30-day supply of a drug, the system allows that refill at 23 days. When a claim for a refill is submitted at any time prior to that 23 days, the pharmacy provider receives an alert indicating that the refill is early. The pharmacy provider can simply override the early refill automatically through the point of sale software.

It has been determined that these overrides are occurring at excessive rates on controlled drugs resulting in overuse, misuse and abuse of these narcotics.

Arkansas Medicaid proposes, effective for claims for dates of service on or after November 1, 2003, that when a recipient requests a refill of a controlled drug before 75% of the supply should have been used, the pharmacy provider will receive an edit message at the point of sale to alert the provider that the controlled drug is being requested early. A provider may request authorization for an override for an early refill by initiating a call to the Medicaid prescription drug help desk if he/she deems the early refill to be a medical necessity, and explaining the reason for the early refill. A manual override may be performed by the prescription drug help desk, rather than an automatic override at the point of sale. If medical necessity is determined after review of the recipient's profile information, the manual override will be approved. Upon approval, the prescription drug help desk will allow a one time early refill.

The purpose of the rule is to require manual review to determine the medical necessity for an early refill. The rule is necessary to maintain the proper time frame in which the prescription is consumed based on days supply per directions by prescribing physician, thus enhancing patient safety and preventing overuse, misuse and abuse of controlled substances.